

MINUTES

NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION

MAY 8, 2008

**Lansing Center
333 E. Michigan
Lansing**

PRESENT FOR THE NRC

Keith Charters, Chair
Frank Wheatlake, Vice Chair
Mary Brown
John Madigan
J. R. Richardson

ABSENT FOR THE NRC

Hurley Coleman
Darnell Earley

PRESENT FOR STAFF

Marie Shamraj, Legal Counsel
Rebecca Humphries, Director
Dennis Fox, Chief of Staff
Dennis Fedewa, Chief Deputy
Mindy Koch, Resource Management Deputy
Tom Courchaine, UP Field Deputy
Teresa Gloden, Assistant to the NRC
Other DNR Staff

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Chairman Charters called the Committee of the Whole meeting of the Natural Resources Commission (NRC) to order at 3:09 p.m.

Budget Update

A detailed budget update was presented and discussed at the NRC Policy Committee on Finance and Administration earlier in the day. See the attached Minutes from that meeting.

Oil and Gas Lease Auction

Director Humphries reported that on May 1, 2008, the DNR held the 228th oil and gas lease auction, and it was one for the records. The auction generated over \$13.9 million and resulted in the leasing of 149,548 acres. The dollar amount is the second highest in history.

There were zero no-bids. This is only the fifth time in the history of DNR leasing program that has resulted in every acre being leased. The first two were for less than 100 acres. In the boom days of the early 1980s, the DNR had two back-to-back auctions for about 74,000 acres each. The DNR doubled this in one auction.

With the rising price of oil and gas, there is a huge demand for leases in the State of Michigan. The DNR auctions have been capped at 100,000 acres based on an analysis of our resources. One company came to Michigan and submitted a 100,000-acre nomination, effectively closing the nomination. They also indicated plans to continue to submit 100,000 acre blocks in at least the next two auctions.

Understanding the importance of these auctions to the industry and Michigan's overall economy, staff worked very creatively, in cooperation with the Michigan Oil and Gas Association (MOGA), to look at ways to expand capacity without reducing services in other areas. Staff worked with the company that submitted the initial 100,000-acre nomination to submit 50,000 acres as nondevelopment, eliminating the need for field review and 50,000 acres that would be reviewed by field staff for classification. This allowed for an additional 50,000 acres to be submitted by other companies.

Frank Mortl, MOGA's Executive Director, called to make sure that both DNR staff and the Commission know how much the industry appreciated the Department's leadership and flexibility in accommodating the increasing demand for leasing of state owned mineral rights.

This will be an ongoing process with the November 2008 auction nominations already over 165,000 acres, and the nomination period is open until June 2. The DNR is working with MOGA to garner support for two additional positions in FY09. The DNR is also redirecting funds this fiscal year to bring on staff yet this year for this effort. The DNR strives to provide the best service it can to the industry while balancing the protection of the State's natural resources.

State Explorer Program

Karen Gourlay, Office of Communications, Explorer Program Coordinator, presented the State Explorer Program, stating that it brings interpretive programming to locations all around Michigan. In 2007, there were 3,321 programs statewide, with 55,245 in attendance and 77,408 roving and informal contacts with the public. The intent of this program is to reach new audiences through the fun and interactive activities yet still providing education.

Chrissy Cannon, Explorer Specialist, Interpreter/Guide, reviewed some of the activities such as Free Fishing Weekend in June, Green Initiatives including education, energy reduction events and other new events that occur during the summer months and are intended to teach children things that will impact them for many years to come. The guides for these programs are seasonal interpreters for the DNR. She was very enthusiastic and said everything is related to everything.

Trapper Education

Valerie Frawley, Wildlife Technician, Wildlife Division, said the development of trapper education is a very important program that will impact the future of trapping in Michigan. Stakeholder groups requested that this program be developed and were part of the development process. Currently, 25 states offer trapper education. As part of the education process, a training manual was developed and the first of the classes will be offered in the fall of 2008. The trapper education consultation team consists of trapping association representatives, independent trappers, and DNR personnel. **Ms. Frawley** noted that fur harvester license sales are rising.

Trapper and trapper education information can be viewed on the DNR web site at [www:michigan.gov/dnr](http://www.michigan.gov/dnr) .

Legislative Update

The Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund Proposal (HB 6002, SB 1257, SJR M, and HJR Z): In the past several weeks, a package of bills has been introduced that could significantly change how the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund (Trust Fund) functions. The changes propose that the Trust Fund board be given the ability to issue bonds against revenue and changes the ratio reserved for the corpus of the Trust Fund from 2/3 to 1/3.

Joint Resolutions Z and M propose to add these questions to the ballot, and the sponsors of the package intend for the question to appear on the ballot during the August primary election.

Both the House and the Senate have scheduled hearings on this package. Director Humphries offered testimony to the Senate Natural Resources and Environmental Affairs Committee last week, and Dan Eichinger offered testimony in the House Tourism, Outdoor Recreation, and Natural Resources Committee this week that brought forward several concerns the Department has with this proposal.

Deciding how much of future revenue streams we spend today, rather than allowing those who follow behind us to have a voice in their future, is a policy debate that needs to be thoroughly discussed.

At the request of the Director, a work group comprised of the Departments of Natural Resources and Treasury, legislative members and staff, and constituent organizations are working hard to resolve areas of conflict and strengthen areas of agreement.

Falconry The House moved out a package of bills that would revise the regulations pertaining to falconry in the State of Michigan. The regulations that exist today are scheduled to sunset in January 2009. The two-bill package repeals the sunset and removes the language specifying the number of raptors eligible for take. That authority would be designated to the NRC. The bills are **HB 5697** and **HB 5983**. The DNR supports the bills.

Tranquilizers: The current prohibited use of tranquilizers or other drugs to take game would be made illegal in statute provided SB 531 continues to move through the legislature. The bill has passed the Senate and was reported out of committee to the floor of the House. The DNR is neutral on the bill because the practice is currently illegal.

ORVs: Senator Jelinek's bill, **SB 296**, would remove the requirement that a youth possess an ORV safety certificate prior to participating in an organized ORV/ATV event held on private land and under certain circumstances. Evidently, the requirement to possess this safety certificate is preventing some from coming to Michigan to participate in sanctioned races. The DNR opposes the bill.

Pigeon River: The House Tourism, Outdoor Recreation, and Natural Resources Committee is expected to post a committee hearing that will include the topic of the Pigeon River Country State Forest. Specifically, the Concept of Management and the program adjustments it recommends will be discussed.

Easements: The Senate Natural Resources and Environmental Affairs Committee has begun work on Representative Lindberg's **HB 4981**. This bill would require that the Department issue easements across publicly-owned land, provided certain circumstances are met. The Department has vigorously opposed this bill for over a year.

Recently, the DNR offered language that would require that any easement not conflict with an existing program or management area. That easement could not conflict with the fund source and attending program limitations that encumber the land across which the easement is being proposed. We are waiting to hear from the sponsor as to whether or not he will accept our suggestions. As written, the DNR opposes the bill.

Falconry: The Senate has taken up the falconry issues as well. Senator Richardville is proposing **SB 1085** which will eliminate the sunset on the falconry regulations as well as designate the authority for determining allowable take to the NRC. The DNR supports SB 1085.

Director's Action Items

Director Humphries noted that the memo, "**Deer Management Units Open to Antlerless Deer Hunting, Public and Private Land License Availability**", had been revised to more specifically designate those areas that will be authorized through a lottery and those to be sold over-the-counter as follows:

All public land antlerless deer licenses and private land antlerless deer licenses for deer management units (DMUs) completely within Zone 1 and DMUs 005, 006, 010, 015, 016, 018, 020, 024, 026, 028, 040, 043, 045, 051, 053, 057, 061, 062, 064, 065, 067, 069, 072, 083, 115, 245, 145, will be authorized through a lottery. If the quota for antlerless licenses exceeds the number of applicants, the leftover antlerless licenses will be sold over-the-counter. These leftover antlerless licenses will become available on a first-come, first-served basis at one antlerless license per hunter per calendar day until the quota is reached, or the season limit for antlerless licenses per person is reached.

All private land antlerless licenses for DMUs completely within Zone 3 and DMUs 001, 004, 009, 035, 037, 054, 056, 060, 061, 068, 071, 135 and 452 will be sold over the counter. These licenses will be available on a first-come, first-served basis at one antlerless license per hunter per calendar day until the quota is reached, or the season limit for antlerless licenses per person is reached.

The **Wolf Management Plan** will be held over for action in July when the NRC meeting is in Munising.

Director's Awards Presentation to the State Forest Management Plan Development Team

Director Humphries said it is a privilege to present the annual Director's Award to a group of DNR employees who have worked diligently to create a comprehensive strategy to manage our state forests.

In the 1900s, there was one clear objective – to restore Michigan's forests after the lumbering era. Today, there are multiple objectives and multiple users of our state forest system. Coordinating the objectives and uses often involves navigating through conflict and competing demands.

These employees worked many, many hours to develop a State Forest Management Plan that addressed ecosystem-based management, sustainable forestry, forest certification, and a much needed update of the Statewide Forest Resource Plan of 1983. Many major components needed to be woven together to create one plan that will govern our management of our state forest resources for years to come.

She presented an overview of team accomplishments explaining just how complex and layered this plan is. First, a history of the state forest, including an analysis of historical composition, structure, extractive uses and reclamation was created. Then a description of current forest cover, health, habitat, wildlife, fisheries and human use conditions and trends. Add to that a statewide management direction, such as what future conditions, goals, objectives, standards and guidelines we wanted for the many uses – recreation, vegetation management, fire management, transportation, law enforcement and governmental and stakeholder relationships. Add to that mix another layer of management direction for special resource areas, including Special Conservation Areas, High Conservation Areas and Ecological Reference Areas. Next, the team developed monitoring and revision protocols. Much like Michigan's forests, this plan is a living and breathing document.

Director Humphries stated that this group put forth an amazing effort to develop this plan, seek public input, and work with stakeholder groups and local units of government to deliver this plan. A roadmap for future use and management objectives for the state forest, the State Forest Management Plan will guide the DNR as careful management decisions that affect multiple users in the future are made. She thanked the team for an outstanding effort and recognized the team as the recipient of the "2008 Director's Award." Each team member received an engraved white pine plaque.

The Committee of the Whole meeting adjourned at 4:10 p.m. and the Public Appearances portion of the meeting convened at 4:20 p.m.

PUBLIC APPEARANCES

Kelly Bartlett
Gay Becketl
Dave Borgeson, Michigan Resource Stewards
Bob Ducharme
Alex Felt, Bradyville QDM Cooperative
Mary Gee
Ken Glasser, Chair, Pigeon River Advisory Council
Peter Gustafson, Pigeon River Country State Forest Steering Committee
Bob Jacobson, Michigan Conservation Foundation
Shiela Jacobson, Michigan Conservation Foundation
Jerry Keck, Michigan Traditional Bow Hunters
Cynthia Kieliszewski, UP Trail Riders
Bruce Levey, Michigan Bow Hunters Association
Charles Lewis
Kathy Lewis
George Lindquist, U.P. Whitetails Association
Tom Lounsbury, United Sportsmen's Alliance
Jeff Magowan, Cycle Club of Michigan
Jim Maturen, Michigan Wild Turkey Hunter's Association
Jamie McMillan
Joel Mikkelsen, Bradyville QDM Cooperative
Ellen Nitz
Rebecca Park, Michigan Farm Bureau
Randy Severance, United Sportsmen's Alliance
Ron Shaver, Mid-Michigan Sportsmen's Alliance
Amy Spray, MUCC
Bob Strong
Terri Swain
Jenness Wiegand

Bob Jacobson, Michigan Conservation Foundation, supported approval of Land Use Order of the Director, Amendment No. 8, an "Order to Regulate the Use of Lands in the Pigeon River Country State Forest (PRCSF), Cheboygan, Montmorency and Otsego counties," to protect the PRCSF.

Ken Glasser, Chair, Pigeon River Advisory Council, supported approval of Land Use Order of the Director, Amendment No. 8, an "Order to Regulate the Use of Lands in the PRCSF, Cheboygan, Montmorency and Otsego counties," to protect the Pigeon River County State Forest. He said there will be objection but supports returning the forest back to a natural state.

Jim Maturen, Michigan Wild Turkey Hunter's Association, supported approval of Land Use Order of the Director, Amendment No. 8, an "Order to Regulate the Use of Lands in the PRCSF, Cheboygan, Montmorency and Otsego counties," to protect the PRCSF, and supports returning the Forest to the big wild.

Peter Gustafson, Pigeon River Country State Forest Steering Committee, supported approval of Land Use Order of the Director, Amendment No. 8, an “Order to Regulate the Use of Lands in the Pigeon River Country State Forest, Cheboygan, Montmorency and Otsego counties,” to protect the PRCSF. He commended staff for efforts to balance protection and for bringing the Land Use Order forward. He said users who can operate consistent with the Order are welcome.

Sheila Jacobson, Michigan Conservation Foundation, said there are few undisturbed areas left in Michigan and requested that the PRCSF be kept from the consumers’ use.

Dave Borgeson, President, Michigan Resource Stewards, supported approval of Land Use Order of the Director, Amendment No. 8, an “Order to Regulate the Use of Lands in the Pigeon River Country State Forest, Cheboygan, Montmorency and Otsego counties,” to protect the PRCSF.

Bruce Levey, Michigan Bow Hunters, supported “Deer Regulations, Wildlife Conservation Order, Amendment No. 7 of 2008, Option B.” He believes that the estimated deer population in the southern Lower Peninsula (Zone 3) remains above the desired population goal. Additional tools are needed to reduce this deer population. He believes this Option will provide additional opportunities to take antlerless deer, assist the DNR with population control, and help address bovine tuberculosis.

Bob Strong, retired DNR regional wildlife biologist, supported approval of Land Use Order of the Director, Amendment No. 8, an “Order to Regulate the Use of Lands in the Pigeon River Country State Forest, Cheboygan, Montmorency and Otsego counties,” to protect the PRCSF. He believes the PRCSF should be enjoyed by all but not at the expense of the unique natural resources.

Joel Mikkelsen, Bradyville QDM Cooperative, supports the UP Whitetails deer management proposal and supports quality deer management (QDM).

Alex Felt, Bradyville QDM Cooperative, supports QDM. He practices QDM and said QDM is successful in increasing the size of bucks.

Chairman Charters recognized **Representative Tom Casperson**.

Rebecca Park, Michigan Farm Bureau, supports “Deer Regulations, Wildlife Conservation Order, Amendment No. 7 of 2008, Option B.”

Amy Spray, MUCC, stated that MUCC is committed to working with the Michigan Farm Bureau on the early antlerless season to get more private access. She said MUCC and Michigan Farm Bureau have a good partnership relative to deer management.

George Lindquist, U. P. Whitetails Association, supports the proposed “Wildlife Conservation Order, Amendment No. 10, Buck Hunting Regulations for the Upper Peninsula.” He believes this Amendment will get more deer in the 2.5 year class in the Upper Peninsula making the deer survival rate higher as well as produce better breeding and better hunting.

Charles Lewis has ridden horses in the PRCSF for 20 years and does not believe horses have damaged the area. He does not support closing areas in the PRCSF to horse back riding.

Gay Becketl does not support closing areas in the PRCSF to horseback riding.

Mary Gee does not support closing areas in the PRCSF to horseback riding.

Ron Shaver, Mid-Michigan Sportsmen's Alliance, supports maintaining the 66 percent approval process for QDM and supports a higher application fee for QDM to cover the costs of processing the QDM application. He also supports: Land Use Order, Amendment No. 8 of 2008 – "Order to Regulate the Use of Lands in the Pigeon River Country State Forest, Cheboygan, Montmorency and Otsego counties"; Parks and Recreation Land Acquisitions, Eight Point Lake Boating Access Site 49-28, Clare County; Option B of the proposed early antlerless deer regulations; and the 8 Point Lake acquisitions, supports Option B in early antlerless firearm; and proposal to allow 100 percent disabled veterans expanded hunting opportunities.

Randy Severance, United Sportsmens Alliance, complimented staff on handling of deer management issues. He believes DNR wildlife biologists are qualified to provide information relative to QDM. He also requested that the approval requirement for mandatory antlerless restrictions not be lowered from 66 percent.

Tom Lounsbury, United Sportsmens Alliance, opposes proposed "Wildlife Conservation Order, Amendment No. 10, Buck Hunting Regulations for the Upper Peninsula," and fully supports the proposed early antlerless season.

Cynthia Kieliszewski, UP Trail Riders, plan to get all trail users together to create an open dialog on utilizing the PRCSF for usage. She believes that all users can work together.

Terri Swain believes the PRCSF should either be for all users or none at all. As a horseback rider, she has never had a negative experience with hunters or other users. She is opposed to riding horses on roads where vehicles travel.

Bob Ducharme is a regional director for QDMA but was representing himself. He supports educating the public on deer management and supports bringing in an outside deer management expert to a future NRC meeting. He also supports the proposed early antlerless season.

Jamie McMillan opposes approval of Land Use Order of the Director, Amendment No. 8, an "Order to Regulate the Use of Lands in the Pigeon River Country State Forest (PRCSF), Cheboygan, Montmorency and Otsego counties," to protect the PRCSF.

Jerry Keck, Michigan Traditional Bow Hunters, supports the proposed early antlerless deer season.

Kathy Lewis opposes approval of Land Use Order of the Director, Amendment No. 8, an "Order to Regulate the Use of Lands in the Pigeon River Country State Forest (PRCSF), Cheboygan, Montmorency and Otsego counties," to protect the PRCSF. She supports a balanced use in the PRCSF.

Jeff Magowan, representing the Cycle Club of Michigan, supports "Land Use Order of the Director, Amendment No. 7," Order to Regulate Specific Existing Off-Road Vehicle Trails by Designating as Motorcycle-Use Only. He also supports the ORV Management Plan and said the group stands ready to assist where they can.

Kelly Bartlett opposes Parks and Recreation Land Acquisition, Eight Point Lake Boating Access Site 49-28 - Clare County, Land Transaction Cases #20080005 and #20070060. He believes this will introduce a dangerous level of road and water traffic in the area.

Ellen Nitz recommended extenders for guns be used at the Island Lake Shooting Range to reduce noise. She would like to be part of the resolution discussion on reducing noise at the Range and said the noise level remains high.

Jenness Wiegand requested that noise from the Island Lake Shooting Range be reduced.

Chairman Charters entered a letter from **Dale McNamee, UP Sportsman's Alliance**, opposing the placement of albino deer on the list of legal game and opposing the proposal to place all antlerless licenses into a lottery system.

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The Public Appearances portion of the meeting adjourned at 5:47 p.m. and the Regular Meeting of the NRC convened immediately thereafter.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – APRIL 10, 2008 NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION MEETING

Commissioner Richardson made a motion, supported by Commissioner Madigan, for approval. Motion unanimously carried.

DEER REGULATIONS, WILDLIFE CONSERVATION ORDER, AMENDMENT NO. 7 OF 2008

Commissioner Madigan made a motion, supported by Commissioner Richardson, for approval. Motion unanimously carried.

DIRECTOR'S ACTION ITEMS

Wolf Management Plan:

Director Humphries held the decision on the Wolf Management Plan over to July when the NRC meeting is in the UP.

Land Use Orders of the Director, Amendment No. 8, Order to Regulate the Use of Lands in the Pigeon River Country State Forest, Cheboygan, Montmorency and Otsego counties:

Director Humphries presented comments as follows:

"The Pigeon River Country State Forest Concept of Management was originally approved December 7, 1973 with the goal to protect and maintain the natural beauty of its forests and waters, and to sustain a healthy elk herd and wildlife populations. This goal and the wilderness character of the Pigeon River Country State Forest have been threatened by increasing recreational use and private development around the PRCSF. This threat includes the creation of unauthorized bridal trails."

"The PRCSF is being loved to death. This is the home of Michigan's elk, which are moving out of the Pigeon, biologists believe, in part, due to the amount and type of recreation use occurring there."

"Three years ago, the Natural Resources Commission requested a review of the Concept of Management based on the perceived need to make management changes to maintain the Pigeon's wilderness character. The Commission established a Steering Committee to lead the review. The Steering Committee named additional subcommittees to review the Concept of Management; public meetings were held; and a work group comprised of representatives from a variety of user groups was created to provide input into the Concept of Management revisions. All versions of the draft plan were posted on the DNR's web site for public review. Updates on the planning process were provided at several NRC meetings."

"The review and subsequent amendments of the original Concept of Management took over two years to complete. The amended Concept of Management was approved in November 2007. During the review process, the US Fish and Wildlife Service conducted a pre-audit of several DNR managed lands and identified problems with unregulated equestrian use in the Pigeon River County State Forest. Those concerns were addressed in the amended Concept of Management."

"The method of acquisition to create the Pigeon River State Forest is unique to the state forest system. More than 50 percent of the public ownership in the Pigeon (a little more than 53,000 acres) were purchased with Game and Fish Protection Fund monies. Because of this funding source, the DNR is legally required to manage the forest primarily for hunting and fishing, and we are currently in violation of those management restrictions. The Land Use Order of the Director on the Agenda for action today will help to correct the management violations."

“Existing Land Use Orders of the Director already prohibit equestrian use on 10,880 acres around Elk Hill. This prohibition is being ignored by the DNR and the users. Even without the approval of additional restrictions, the DNR must begin to enforce the existing regulations.”

Director Humphries said, “I plan to approve the Order to limit bicycling and equestrian use to forest roads, county roads, designated trails and campgrounds as the next step in the Department’s responsibility in appropriately managing public use in the Pigeon. Michigan is blessed with a large amount of land that is available for public recreation. We have the largest state forest system in the nation to provide recreation opportunities to all users.”

“The controversy around equestrian use on the 118,000 acres of the Pigeon River Country State Forest has made many people lose sight of the 3.8 million acres of opportunity in the rest of the State forest system. The DNR will continue to work with equestrian groups to enhance equestrian opportunities. For example, the three equestrian campgrounds along the shore-to-shore trail that were closed due to budget cuts last year will be reopened this year. The DNR manages campgrounds dedicated for equestrian use. The DNR provides increased equestrian use opportunities through the expanding rail to trail program including the newly constructed Gaylord-to-Cheboygan Trail. Approximately 2,500 acres of newly acquired public land north of the Pigeon on the Lee Grande Ranch, is available for equestrian use.”

* * *

Director Humphries stated her intent to sign all Director’s Action items on the Agenda **except the Wolf Management Plan.**

COMMITTEES REPORTS

Crossbow Disability Work Group: See attached Minutes.

NRC Policy Committee on Parks and Recreation: See attached Minutes.

NRC Policy Committee on Land Management: See attached Minutes.

NRC Policy Committee on Finance and Administration: See attached Minutes.

NRC Policy Committee on Wildlife and Fisheries: See attached Minutes.

COMMISSIONER REPORTS

Commissioner Richardson met with Bill Scullon and the UP Whitetails in the west end of the UP to discuss partnering on habitat issues in the Ottawa State Forest; and attended a DNR Citizen’s Advisory Council meeting.

Commissioner Madigan attended the first meeting of the DNR Citizen’s Advisory Council meeting in Marquette.

* * *

The meeting adjourned at 6:02 p.m.

CROSSBOW DISABILITY WORK GROUP

May 8, 2008

Present for the Work Group

Christine Clements
Rex Darlington
Jeff DeRegnaucourt
Jeff Johnstone
Charles Jordan
Jerry Keck
Bruce Levey
Tim Mingie
Brian Osterwalder
Amy Spray
Jim Trinklein
Tom Wilming
Mike Bailey
Dennis Knapp
John Madigan
Bill Pemble
J. R. Richardson
Patricia Spitzley

The meeting convened at 9:05 a.m.

Commissioner Madigan stated that decisions made will be done on a majority rules basis.

Dennis Knapp, Acting Assistant to the Resource Management Deputy, reviewed the appropriate authorities for crossbow related issues. He said the DNR and NRC have the authority to issue permits for permanently disabled hunters to obtain crossbow permits. Legislation would be required to allow permits to those with temporary disabilities.

The Work Group then reviewed and discussed a “first cut” of a revised permit application based on elements from Wisconsin and Illinois applications, previously discussed by the group.

Following discussion, Rex Darlington made a motion, supported by Chuck Jordan, to set the minimum bow poundage to 35 pounds for a “functional draw test.” Motion passed unanimously.

Following discussion, Chuck Jordan made a motion, supported by Dr. Wilming, to require a minimum of four (4) seconds of holding the bow in shooting position for a “functional draw test.” If unable to do so, this may qualify the applicant for a crossbow permit. Motion passed 6-2.

Following discussion, Chuck Jordan made a motion, supported by Jeff DeRegnaucourt, to accept physicians, and physical and occupational therapists to perform the muscle weakness and range of motion evaluations, provided that test methods and results are submitted with the application. Motion passed 6-4.

The above motions are not final recommendations, but will be utilized in developing the next draft permit application. It was agreed that progress has been made on this issue.

Discussion also occurred relative to an applicant's ability to be fraudulent during the testing process.

The next meeting of the Work Group will be on June 5 where a revised permit application will be presented and discussed with revisions discussed at this meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 11:00 a.m.

NRC POLICY COMMITTEE ON PARKS AND RECREATION

May 8, 2008

PRESENT FOR THE NRC

Keith Charters, Chairman, Traverse City
Frank Wheatlake, Vice-Chairman, Big Rapids
Mary Brown, Kalamazoo
Hurley J. Coleman, Jr., Saginaw, Chair, NRC Parks and Recreation Committee

PRESENT FOR STAFF

Rebecca Humphries, Director
Dennis Fox, Chief of Staff
Mindy Koch, Resource Management Deputy
Lynn Boyd, Chief, Forest, Mineral and Fire Management
Ron Olson, Chief, Parks and Recreation
Other DNR Staff

NRC POLICY COMMITTEE ON PARKS AND RECREATION

Acting Chairman Brown called the nrc Policy Committee on Parks and Recreation to order at 9:00 a.m.

Ron Olson introduced the agenda items and referenced the new Michigan Harbors Guide, which was 75% funded by a grant from the Sport Fish Restoration Program.

1. Waterways Program Presentation: Parks and Recreation Update: **Bill Boik** gave a presentation on the Waterways Program, and began with the statement of the Michigan State Waterways Commission: "Works to provide safe public access to the Great Lakes and inland waters of the State of Michigan. Working with partners, the Commission oversees the use of dedicated funds provided by boaters for the acquisition, construction and operation of the infrastructure needed to support boating." The presentation gave an overview of the program's goals (upgrade and maintain existing facilities, create new boating access site facilities), funding sources (state gas taxes, watercraft registrations, user fees, federal funding), boating access sites (1,021 DNR and 171 Grant In Aid), harbors of refuge, Grant In Aid Programs (provide financial and technical assistance for improvement of community facilities, preliminary engineering study and infrastructure improvement grants), the award winning Michigan Recreational Boating Information System (MRBIS) web site, the challenges of the program (dredging, legal issues, tribal use, unregistered watercraft, aging infrastructure, boating access site acquisition and development), the fee sites (66 of 1,021 Department-managed sites are fee sites), and the Harbor Central Reservation System (10 state harbors and 29 Grant In Aid harbors are participants).

PRD maintains two lock systems in Michigan: Cheboygan Lock and Dam and Alanson Locks, and when combined, accommodate approximately 15,000 passages per year.

Commissioner Charters asked who determines the amount of revenue that the Parks and Recreation Division requires. Answer: **Chief Ron Olson** and **Director Humphries** decide on this amount before it goes to the Legislature.

Commissioner Coleman asked how we prioritize the projects for Grant In Aid requests. Answer: use patterns, population and field staff recommendations combined with our Tier One Review List that determines the highest priority.

Harold Herta provided an overview of fee boating access sites. A fee site is needed when it requires maintenance by staff such as: trash pickup, grass mowing, toilet cleaning, as well as possibly directing traffic at extremely busy and congested sites. Fee sites are \$6.00 daily or \$24 for an annual pass.

2. Urban Park Users Development Strategy: **Gary Williams** from MSU Extension and DNR presented Outdoor Education in our Parks. Last year a new program was introduced called “An Outdoor Skills Clinic,” which incorporated archery education to the existing angling education and learning about the great State of Michigan. This program is located at the pocket park at the Michigan State Fairgrounds. It is a half day program that includes approximately 20-30 children per session. Every child is guaranteed to catch a fish. Participants came from programs from the Salvation Army, Oakland County 4-H, Detroit Recreation Department, etc.

Commission Brown asked how many times a child would attend the program. Answer: One time.

Gary Williams provided additional overview of another urban outreach program called Kicking Bear (a camping and archery experience). At Sleepy Hollow State Park, 325 children participated in this event. The participants were very diverse from a variety of urban areas.

Commissioner Charters asked what would it take to bring the number of participants from 1,722 to 9,000. Answer: having proper facilities, skilled staffing, additional funds, partnering with local units of governments, prioritizing and making it an issue, and using the existing program as a model and prototype for other groups to use.

Carl Lindell talked about the goals of the Michigan State Parks and Recreation Areas Outreach Program. Most important is to revitalize, expand and diversify our user base and become a more relevant agency in urban areas.

Carl introduced **Mike Terrell**, Manager of Warren Dunes State Park. Mike provided an overview of his mentoring project aimed at increasing and sustaining diversity at the park. The program will hire high school juniors from both traditional and non-traditional user groups from the local communities of Benton Harbor and Buchanan. This group of young people will be trained to master the

basic tasks done daily by a park ranger (apprenticeship program) and include experiences such as carpentry and plumbing skills, public interaction, and preventative maintenance. This experience is meant to challenge, educate, and prepare these students for future endeavors and increase awareness of employment and recreational opportunities within the Parks and Recreation Division.

Jackie Culberson, Outreach Coordinator from Bay City Recreation Area, spoke about her successful efforts to reach out to diversity groups at various churches and communities, and introduce them to our State Parks and Recreation Areas. It takes each and every one of us to make it happen but it can be done.

Murdock Jemerson distributed the draft agenda for the upcoming May 28 Citizens Committee for Michigan State Parks meeting scheduled at P. J. Hoffmaster State Park. A key issue will be finding a long term sustainable funding source and to continue discussions on the Michigan license plate proposal, which the committee members have outreached to some legislators.

3. Idlewild: This topic will be held over and presented at a future meeting.

Commissioner Coleman adjourned the meeting.

**NRC JOINT POLICY COMMITTEE ON
PARKS AND RECREATION
AND LAND MANAGEMENT**

May 8, 2008

PRESENT

Commissioner Keith Charters, Chair
Commissioner Mary Brown
Commissioner Frank Wheatlake
Commissioner Hurley Coleman
Director Rebecca Humphries
Resource Management Deputy Mindy Koch
Dennis Fox, DNR
Dave Freed, DNR, OLAF
Lynne Boyd, DNR, FMFM
Ron Olson, DNR, PRD
Dan Eichinger, Acting Legislative Liaison, DNR
Cindy Salmon, DNR, OLAF
Sue Tangora, DNR, WLD
Kerry Fitzpatrick, DNR, WLD
David Price, DNR, FMFM
Tony Herek, DNR, PRD
Rob Corbett, DNR, OLAF
Jon Mayes, DNR, OLAF
Rodney Stokes, DNR, LED
Annamarie Bauer, DNR, FMFM
Roger Storm, DNR, OLAF
Sharon Schafer, DNR, BSS
Sara Schaefer, DNR
Mike Bailey, DNR, WLD
Mike Donovan, DNR, WLD
Doug Reeves, DNR, WLD
Harold Herta, DNR, PRD
LuAnn Klont, DNR, LS
Kelly Carter, DNR, WLD
Norma Laine, Shiawassee Trail Riders
Bonnie Scott, Shiawassee Trail Riders
Deanna Stamp, trail rider
Mary Gee, trail rider
Cathy Ehred, trail rider
Laura Roberts, Shiawassee Trail Riders
Terri Swain, Shiawassee Trail Riders
Jean Tata, trail rider
Gary Lenger, MTRA
Ray Dodge, MTRA
Joann & Edward Schings, Shiawassee Trail Riders
Linda Coleman, Shiawassee Trail Riders
Karen & Gary Philpott, Shiawassee Trail Riders

Val Vail-Shirey, Michigan Equine Partnership
Gay & Paul Bechtel, equestrian user
Charles & Kathy Lewis, Elk Hill equestrian user
Jamie McMillan, Elk Hill equestrian user
Reggie Letang, Elk Hill
Jim DeClerck, Saginaw Field & Stream

Chairman Keith Charters called the meeting to order at 10:22 a.m.

Pigeon River Country State Forest (PRCSF) Land Use Orders

Resource Management Deputy Mindy Koch gave a brief background and history of the PRCSF, and what the Department has done to update the Concept of Management.

The DNR manages public use on 4.5 million acres that the DNR holds title. The DNR manages use on these lands to try to balance all of the interests of the public. Managing public recreation opportunities is done to allow the greatest diversity of use, while protecting the natural resources.

The Department has been ridiculed, as well as the Commission, for suggesting that there is a “Big Wild” and that management should occur to maintain a “Big Wild.”

As a reminder, the Commission did validate that concept back in 2005. There has been a lot of false information generated that isn’t necessarily based on fact.

Over 53,000 acres (out of 118,000) in the PRCFS River were purchased with Game and Fish monies, and are legally mandated to be used for that purpose.

Equestrian use is not being banned in the PRCSF. There will be 280 miles available for equestrian use. Much of that is on forest roads and county roads, but also still have the shore-to-shore trail that runs through the length of the PRCSF. The DNR has created three smaller loops stemming off Elk Hill (the campground that is most used) so that there are some small loop opportunities. The State Forest campgrounds that were closed were the ones that had the lowest use; just so happens that three of those were equestrian campgrounds. They were closed strictly for budgetary reasons. All of those closed campgrounds will be open soon.

The state of Michigan has 900 miles of rails-to-trails throughout the state that are open to equestrian use, as well as other uses, and the DNR plans to acquire additional miles.

Deputy Koch stated that PRCSF trail riders have claimed that equestrian use has had no impact on wildlife. She does not believe this is true. Wildlife biologists claim the elk herd is moving outside of the PRCSF due to recreational uses.

The equestrian users would like to see a one-year moratorium on any additional restrictions on equestrian use within the PRCSF. Ms. Koch doesn’t see what that would accomplish. This has already been a two-year planning process. The Game and Fish funding issue won’t go away, and changing that would jeopardize our federal Pittman-Robertson money. The DNR currently has prohibition on cross-country equestrian use

in the PRCSF today. It has been established for a long time but has been ignored. However, if the Order does not move forward, the DNR will need to move forward with enforcement and education of the current law.

The Land Use Order of the Director that is on the May 8, 2008 Natural Resources Commission Agenda for Director's action limits equestrian camping to the Elk Hill Trail Camp and Johnson's Crossing Trail Camp. It will allow 280 miles of equestrian use, and the order also relates to bicycling, which will allow bicycling for a total of 300 miles within the PRCSF, including county roads, forest roads, the High Country Pathway, the Shingle Mill Pathway, and the Pickerel Lake Pathway. Staff recommends approval.

The DNR commits to continue to work with equestrian users and bicyclists to try to increase opportunities on public lands for those types of uses.

Commissioner Coleman noted that it is obvious that staff have researched this very thoroughly, and he appreciates all those efforts to educate the public on why decisions are made, because it is clear that this is an emotional issue for the public.

Commissioner Brown asked if the DNR could restrict the county road commission from creating any new roads. **Deputy Koch** said the DNR has had many discussions with the county. They need permission from the DNR to construct any more right-of-way.

Deputy Koch introduced **Ken Blaker** who is the current Chair of the Pigeon River Country State Forest Advisory Council, and **Peter Gustafson** who is past Chair and sat on the steering committee for the Concept of Management.

Commissioner Wheatlake said he also appreciates the effort.

Chairman Charters noted that **Deputy Koch** said that the DNR was very remiss in enforcing its own rules previously. How will they be enforced now? She stated the DNR has a renewed commitment to enforcement. Staff in that area is now working very closely with law enforcement at the local level. The DNR needs to do a better job of educating the public also. **Her** future goal is to dedicate a conservation officer to the PRCSF for enforcement.

Director Humphries added that local managers throughout the state had some misunderstanding of what the use constraints were. Through Forest Certification, reviews by the Fish and Wildlife Service, and recent audits, local DNR managers have achieved a better understanding of the restrictions and more emphasis is on this now.

Eight Point Lake Boating Access Site Acquisition

Ron Olson, Chief of Parks and Recreation, noted that there is a Director's land transaction memo in the packet for today's meeting regarding this acquisition for Director's approval.

On March 28, 2008, the Waterways Commission voted to move forward with this purchase, in order to have a public boating access site on this 388-acre lake, which is the largest lake in Clare County. Public meetings have been held to address the concerns of property owners on the lake.

Chairman Charters noted that the reason this is on the committee agenda today is because this has generated quite a bit of controversy.

Chief Olson feels that is because there is currently no public launch and cottage owners would like to keep it that way. They don't want the lake to be over-populated with boats and excessive activity. The DNR agreed to improve the access road due to local concerns. The parking lot would only hold 20-25 cars with a single boat ramp.

The current private launch on the lake is currently for sale, and there is no foregone conclusion that it will remain a launch.

NRC POLICY COMMITTEE ON LAND MANAGEMENT

May 8, 2008

1. Lee Grande Ranch

Bill O'Neil of Forest, Mineral, and Fire Management, gave a PowerPoint presentation. This is a great piece of property that we acquired last year. There is a Land Use Order in the packet today to restrict wheeled motor vehicles, and he will explain why we think that is a good idea.

This acquisition encompasses 2,434 acres. This is part of the new age of our acquisitions; we have a conservation easement. We partnered with the Little Traverse Conservancy on this. Our interests were purchased with a Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund grant. We obtained more than 50 percent of the mineral rights. Mr. Peterson kept the remainder of the mineral rights for his lifetime.

This property is just north of the Pigeon River Country State Forest.

The conservation easement conveyed limited development rights. We do have permission to develop a visitor center and parking lots. The DNR will manage the public access. This was private property that was fenced and gated previously.

There is an existing perimeter fence that gives us some posting/notification opportunities. We are suggesting that we limit vehicular access and we limit wheeled motor vehicles within this area. There are roads up to the perimeter and almost all the way around the property, so we want to limit vehicles to the parking areas.

The key values are a unique walk-in opportunity; the hunter feedback has been positive; and an ability to manage wildlife in a setting not compromised by unrestricted motor vehicle access.

Sixty percent of this property is forest (aspen and upland), and the remainder is open area.

This property will be accessible by walk-in only, but we will allow drive in to pick up harvested animals.

We had a lot of discussion with local folks in the area, and they are really excited about this purchase.

The controlled motor vehicle access allows wildlife to exist in a more natural environment, and allows us to manage the aspen forest.

2. Carney Fen Natural Area

Sue Tangora from the Wildlife Division gave a presentation regarding the State Natural Areas System, an explanation of the dedication process, specific information about the Carney Fen Natural Area, and the Department's recommendation.

Our Natural Area System contains 20 legally-dedicated natural areas, and 58 areas that have been designated by the DNR as natural areas. Legislative dedication occurs under the Wilderness and Natural Areas Act, Public Act 241 of 1972, recodified as Section 34102 of Part 351, 1994 PA 451.

The prohibited activities for a natural area include habitat alteration; new easements; mineral exploration or extraction; commercial enterprise, utilities or roads; and use of motorized vehicles or equipment.

The nomination review process and Legislative dedication includes: 1) the nomination packet; 2) Department review; 3) public information meeting; 4) Director's decision; and 5) Legislative action, including a public hearing.

The Carney Fen is in Menominee County, just west of the town of Carney, in the Escanaba State Forest System. It was nominated by the Friends of the Carney Fen, who have been stewards of the area for many years.

The area has unique natural communities including a northern fen; a rich conifer swamp; and the largest and most diverse population of orchids in Michigan. The Carney Fen has the Northern goshawk, and the Dwarf lake iris. This area contains the headwaters for the Sharkey River.

The Department recognizes the northern fen as an ecological reference area, and no other northern fen has been legally dedicated in the Upper Peninsula.

The decision that we are recommending today encompasses 2,326 acres of the Carney Fen Natural Area.

Commissioner Wheatlake asked how many acres of natural areas in the State Forest we currently have. **Ms. Tangora** said 48,000 acres. **Commissioner Wheatlake** then asked what the goal is.

The law authorizes up to 10 percent of our state forest to be designated as natural area; she believes it is up to 1 million acres. **Commissioner Wheatlake** had a problem with taking this amount of area out of our ability to manage it. **Acting Wildlife Chief Reeves** said that the DNR has no intention of designating that amount of state forest.

Director Humphries said this is up for Director's action next month.

Chairman Charters adjourned the meeting at 11:30 a.m.

NRC POLICY COMMITTEE ON FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

MAY 8, 2008

PRESENT FOR THE COMMITTEE/COMMISSION

Commissioner Frank Wheatlake, Committee Chair
Commissioner J. R. Richardson
Commissioner John Madigan
Commission Chair Keith Charters
Commssioner Hurley Coleman
Commissioner Mary Brown

The meeting convened at 12:00 noon.

MONTHLY DNR SPEND PLAN REVIEW

Sharon Schafer, Chief, Office of Budget and Support Services, introduced **Jason Crandall, a newly hired capital outlay/budget analyst for the Office of Budget and Support Services**.

Sharon Schafer reviewed the DNR monthly Spend Plan. This can be viewed on the following web address:

http://www.michigan.gov/dnr/0,1607,7-153-39002_11862_49123---,00.html

As of March 31, 2008, the Department has spent approximately \$1M more as compared to the same time last year. There is good news in that there will now be sufficient funds to keep Michigan Civilian Conservation Corps program running through fiscal year 2009.

Work continues to spend down the funds. Relative to hiring, there is still less staff than at the beginning of the fiscal year. In the next few weeks, 25 new employees will be attending the new employee orientation program.

Director Humphries said that the hiring process is moving forward, but it takes time. Interviews are taking place and good progress has been made.

Ms. Schafer reported that the DNR Payment-in-lieu of taxes (PILT) have been paid.

LIMITED REVIEW - FISHERIES DIVISION

Tom Benson, Chief, Internal Audit, stated that the DNR established a process for limited reviews of each Division's spend plans, and the Fisheries Division limited review has been finalized and submitted to Director Humphries. The Office of Communications limited review report is being drafted, and Law Enforcement and Wildlife Divisions reviews recently commenced. Internal Audit hopes to complete the first phase of reviews by the end of June and go back to the divisions by mid-July for follow-up and document their findings in future reports.

QUARTERLY REVENUE REPORT AS OF MARCH 31, 2008

Dawn Fedewa, Office of Budget and Support Services, reviewed the quarterly revenue report. Following is the link to that report:

http://www.michigan.gov/dnr/0,1607,7-153-39002_11862_49123---,00.html

Parks Improvement Fund revenues were lower and Forest Development Fund revenues were higher. Hunting and fishing licenses are tracking behind at this time but some of this is expected due to the pull-ahead sales from last fiscal year. The late cold, wet spring has also delayed the purchase of fishing licenses. We are continuing to watch this closely. In those funds that reflect a negative balance, the respective division will take appropriate measures to ensure that the fund remains positive or at zero.

PARKS AND RECREATION DIVISION TRENDS REPORT

Ron Olson, Chief, Parks and Recreation Division, suggested that increased planned activities in State Parks have increased camper nights. To date, base permit sales are strong. Revenues, however, are down slightly by .04 percent. Due to the higher gas prices, Parks and Recreation Division has established the Gas-Saving Camper/Equipment Storage Program to provide opportunity to loyal State Park or Recreation Area campers to leave their camping units at State park or recreation area locations as an alternative to towing or driving the unit home between State Park visits. This is not available at all parks and recreation areas, but the list is expanding. This storage option would be at no charge to the customer. It is estimated that campers could reduce fuel costs by one-third by minimizing towing and by allowing campers to store their recreational vehicles for up to 15 days at the park at the end of their reservation if they have another reservation within 15 days. It is anticipated that this may draw additional interest in campers.

ANNUAL AVAILABLE FUND BALANCE PROJECTIONS

Ms. Schafer reviewed the DNR restricted revenue fund balance projections and targets. The Game and Fish Fund balance is predicated on spending 95% of appropriated amounts and if that varies or if the revenues do not recover, the fund balance projection may have to be adjusted accordingly. Staff will work with the Waterways Commission on establishing a desired target fund balance for the Waterways Fund.

INVESTMENTS UPDATE

Woody Tyler, Department of Treasury, Stock Analysis Division, and Joe Frick, Chief, Office of Financial Services, DNR, reviewed DNR investment asset allocation and earnings distribution plans for the Natural Resources Trust Fund, Park Endowment Fund, Game and Fish Trust Fund and the Nongame Trust Fund. Also in attendance and participating in the discussion from Treasury were **Jon Braeutigam, Chief, Bureau of Investments, and Paul Nelson, Fixed Income Division**. In June, 2007, equities were sold prior to the market decline. The Treasurer has since reinvested all but a final sixth of the equities during market dips. Current equity market values are approximately at our new cost basis. For bonds, there have been a large number of recent "calls," not all of which have been reinvested. As a result, currently funds are underinvested in both equities and bonds and reinvestment is in progress. He reviewed the current

equity/fixed ratios and provided the target desired equity/fixed ratio for these funds. Discussion ensued relative to investments.

Committee Chairman Wheatlake asked for input from the Committee and Commissioners on asset allocations for the Parks Endowment Fund, Game and Fish Trust Fund and the Nongame Trust Fund.

Dennis Fedewa, Chief Deputy, commented that the NRC may wish to consider a likely need to minimize investment risk to the stabilization fund should it be needed to cover potential Game and Fish Protection Fund revenue shortfalls.

Mr. Frick reviewed investment asset allocation, revenue stabilization reserve balances, and spending plan recommendations.

Discussion ensued on the Game and Fish Trust Fund asset allocation. The Committee recommended a 40/60 (equity/fixed) allocation, essentially keeping it as it is currently and it will continue to monitor the fund.

2008 SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATION

Lynne Boyd, Chief, Forest, Mineral and Fire Management Division, said the Division received a \$1 million supplemental, of which \$500,000 will be utilized for fire protection. Any balance at the end of the fiscal year will be utilized for equipment needs. Another \$500,000 will be utilized to reopen state forest campgrounds previous closed by Memorial Day weekend. She said the Division is trying to stretch the supplemental as far as possible.

The meeting adjourned at 1:45 p.m.

NRC POLICY COMMITTEE ON WILDLIFE AND FISHERIES

May 8, 2008

Meeting began at 2:06 pm. Commissioners Wheatlake, Brown, Charters, Richardson, and Madigan were present. Director Humphries was also present.

Doug Reeves introduced Sara Schaefer, Wildlife Division Acting Assistant Chief, and Adam Bump, new Wildlife Division Furbearer/Bear Specialist, to the Commissioners.

Rod Clute, Wildlife Division, presented the recommended deer management units that would be open or closed for public and private antlerless deer licenses. There are a recommended 67 counties open to both private and public land antlerless deer licenses and 18 counties open to private land only antlerless deer licenses. Twelve counties are recommended to be closed to any antlerless deer permits. Rod also asked the NRC to consider removing the protection on albino and all-white deer due to the difficulty of distinguishing piebald deer and the protection this regulation actually provides to white exotic cervids.

Adam Bump, Wildlife Division, presented two recommended changes to furbearer regulations. The first is to prohibit trapping within 50 feet of mowed portion of day use area within a State Recreation Area. (Note: park manager could authorize certain trapping techniques for raccoons.) The second recommendation is to open stretches of Pere Marquette and White River to beaver and otter trapping, which had been closed due to low beaver and otter numbers. Also, Adam recommended opening public land in Colfax Township in Mecosta County to beaver and otter trapping. The areas were closed for beaver and otter population reestablishment.

Doug Reeves, Wildlife Division, presented buck hunting regulation options for the Upper Peninsula. There would be two options for harvesting an antlered deer in the U.P. An individual could buy a combination license, which includes a regular license (must have at least three points on one antler) and a restricted license (must have at least four points on one antler) OR the option is to purchase an archery or firearm license, which would allow the hunter to harvest one legally defined antlered deer (no point restrictions; one antler at least three inches in length). With the one buck option, one buck may be taken during the archery, firearm, and muzzleloader seasons combined in the UP only. In the LP, there would be no changes to the buck regulations. Doug explained if someone hunts in both the UP and LP they could fill one archery tag or one firearm tag in the UP and the other in the LP but the UP tag would have to be placed on a deer with four or more points on an antler.

There were numerous questions about how this system would work for hunter who hunted both in the UP and the LP and the difficulty of regulating hunters. There was also a question to the Division about evaluating the impact this regulation change had on the deer herd, if any. Doug commented that the Wildlife Division was discussing possible techniques for evaluating impacts, such as following hunter's buying patterns across time and also examining changes in deer size, etc. at check stations. Doug thought it would take 3 to 5 years to understand the impact of such a regulation change. One

individual asked if a sunset could be placed on the order to force evaluation of the impacts in five years.

Next, Doug outlined the Division's proposals on the Special Deer Hunts (for action in May). Wildlife Division recommends that Veterans with 100% disability as determined by US Dept. of Veterans Affairs be allowed to participate in the September youth Hunt. Also, Veterans rated by US Dept. of Veterans affairs could also participate in the September youth hunt and October disabled hunt. Doug also provided two options for an early antlerless deer hunt. The first option was the 2nd weekend in October in the five-county TB area and Iosco and Shiawassee counties. The second option is to hold the hunt the 3rd Thursday in September for four days on private land in the five-county TB area, Iosco County and all of Zone 3. An individual asked if a "ZZ" tag would be possible for the early antlerless season, which would allow someone to use the tag on any private land in Zone 3. Doug said it would be possible with a regulations change.

Lastly, Director Humphries asked Doug to go over the Wildlife Division's commitment to wolf management. Doug outlined a list of commitments. Commissioner Madigan commented that he liked the approach, especially the annual report concept. He will appreciate a yearly update on wolves and how DNR will adapt management based on trends. After that, he asked Director Humphries to wait to sign the wolf management plan until the July NRC meeting in Munising. He would like the UP citizens to have an opportunity to provide comment at that meeting. The Director agreed it would be a good decision to wait until then.

The meeting adjourned at 2:50 p.m.